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IDOT and Illinois Law Enforcement Warn Motorists Not to Become an Impaired Monster

State and Local Police Step Up Patrols for Halloween

SPRINGFIELD – As Illinoisans gear up for Halloween this year, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP), Secretary of State Police (SOS) and local police agencies throughout Illinois are warning motorists about the dangers of impaired driving. The message is simple this Halloween - if *You Drink & Drive. You Lose!*

“We want everyone to enjoy this Halloween, but we are asking that Illinoisans act responsibly and not turn this fun tradition into tragedy,” said IDOT Secretary Milton R. Sees. “Law enforcement officials will be on the lookout for impaired drivers to help reduce the chances of injury or death to those out enjoying the evening.”

Nationally, in the last 25 years, the percentage of motor vehicle fatalities involving alcohol during the Halloween time period has been higher than the overall national average. Here in Illinois in the last five years, 23 motorists and pedestrians were killed on Halloween and 9 of those fatalities involved alcohol.

“Because Halloween falls on a weekend this year, many individuals will choose to host and attend Halloween parties where alcohol is consumed,” said Illinois State Police Director Larry G. Trent. “In an effort to protect children who will be out trick-or-treating, the ISP and local law enforcement will be extra vigilant in keeping impaired drivers off Illinois roads and neighborhood streets. Motorists should be mindful of safety first and make the decision to not drink and drive during the festive weekend.”

For a safer Halloween weekend, IDOT recommends these simple tips:

- Designate your responsible sober driver before going out and give that person your keys;
- If you drink alcohol, call a taxi, use mass transit or call a sober friend or family member to help get you home safely;
- Promptly report drunk drivers you see on the roadways to law enforcement;
- Always buckle up - it's still your best defense against an impaired driver;
- If you know someone who is about to drive after consuming alcohol, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get safely where they are going.

For more information about the Division of Traffic Safety's impaired driving and safety campaigns, go online to: www.drivesoberillinois.org.